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Chairman: Mr. Fermin (Vice-Chairman) (Dominican Republic)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Ms. McLurg

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In the absence of Mr. Bródi (Hungary), Mr. Fermín (Dominican Republic), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 118: Programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 (*continued*)

Conditions of service and compensation for officials, other than Secretariat officials, serving the General Assembly: full-time members of the International Civil Service Commission and the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/63/354 and A/63/726)

1. **Ms. Bezák-Metzler** (Chief, Conditions of Service Section, Office of Human Resources Management), introducing the report of the Secretary-General (A/63/354), said that part II of the report provided an overview of the evolution of the annual net compensation of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) and the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) from the time of the previous comprehensive review in 2003 through to 2008. The annual net compensation of the three officials was adjusted in January of each year by 90 per cent of the movement in the consumer price index for New York. Based on that procedure, at the time of writing of the report, it had been anticipated that the annual net compensation of the three officials would be increased by 4 per cent beginning on 1 January 2009. The actual increase, however, had been 2 per cent.

2. No changes were proposed in the level of the special allowance payable to the Chairman of ICSC and the Chairman of ACABQ in recognition of their added responsibilities. That allowance had last been revised in 2000 and established at $10,000 per annum with effect from 1 January 2001, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 55/238. Neither were any changes recommended with regard to the other conditions of service of the three officials concerned.

3. In its resolution 46/192, the General Assembly had decided that officials appointed or elected to ungraded positions who became participants in the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund should have their pensionable remuneration adjusted, between comprehensive reviews, in accordance with the procedure applicable for adjustment of the scale of pensionable remuneration of staff in the Professional and higher categories, as set out in article 54 (b) of the Regulations of the Fund. Since then, the pensionable remuneration of the three officials concerned had been adjusted at the same time and by the same percentage as their annual compensation. Accordingly, a 2 per cent increase had been applied as of 1 January 2009.

4. On the basis of the information provided in the report, it had been estimated that there would be additional requirements of $33,194 for the programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009. However, since the annual compensation and pensionable remuneration of the three officials concerned had in fact been adjusted by only 2 per cent as of 1 January 2009, the additional requirements would be half the previously estimated figure.

5. In accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 58/266, the next comprehensive review should be undertaken when the level of the annual compensation of the Chairman of ICSC and the Chairman of ACABQ fell below that of Assistant Secretaries-General.

6. **Ms. McLurg** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/63/726), said that the Advisory Committee concurred with the proposed adjustment in the level of the annual compensation of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of ICSC and the Chairman of ACABQ. It recommended that the General Assembly should take note of the Secretary-General's report (A/63/354).

7. **Mr. Abdelmannan** (Sudan), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the report of the Secretary-General provided useful information about the adjustments that had been made to the annual net compensation of the officials concerned between 2004 and 2008, on the basis of movements in the consumer price index. The Secretary-General had indicated that the total annual net compensation of the Chairman of ICSC and the Chairman of ACABQ might drop slightly below that of Assistant Secretaries-General in January 2009 and he was proposing to apply an increase, which would mean additional funds would be required and requested from the Assembly at its sixty-fourth session. Taking into account the time that

had elapsed since the publication of the report, the Group requested an update on the situation.

8. The Group requested further information on the remuneration of the Vice-Chairman of the Advisory Committee.

9. **Ms. Hefu** (Namibia), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, said that the Group supported ongoing United Nations efforts to ensure that the benefits and entitlements of staff and other officials serving the General Assembly kept pace with economic realities. The issue warranted continuous review, pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 45/249, 46/192 and 55/238 and previous relevant resolutions.

10. ICSC and ACABQ must be adequately equipped to perform their functions, particularly in view of the Assembly's expanded agenda, which covered issues affecting common system organizations, specialized agencies and operational funds and programmes. The African Group appreciated the important expert and advisory roles played by the two bodies in enabling the Assembly to take well-informed and timely policy decisions, based on their technical analysis of the issues within their respective mandates. The technical report before the Committee provided a good basis for Member States to reflect on the broader issues affecting the conditions of service of members of those subsidiary organs of the General Assembly. The African Group noted that, despite the exponential growth in the number of issues requiring comprehensive examination, the model on which ACABQ, in particular, had been established 60 years previously had not changed.

11. Lastly, the Group noted that since 1994 the Advisory Committee had had a Vice-Chairman, whose important role had not been fully recognized. The Group would be seeking specific information, in informal consultations, on that and other broader issues raised in the two reports before the Committee.

The meeting rose at 10.25 a.m.